Example 1, Searching at the Airport.

If you had never seen me, and had to meet me at the airport, how would you single me out from the crowd? All you know is that I'm a man and my name's Ron Graham.

But imagine I told you beforehand, "I'll be wearing a grey suit and red gumboots, and doing tricks with a yo-yo." You would not take long to single me out, would you? The process is simple:

1. Look for people doing yo-yo tricks.
2. Check them for red gumboots, grey suit.
3. If they are males, check their names.

Well that's not too difficult. With enough marks you can eliminate most people at the airport with a passing glance. You'd simply zoom in on the few likely targets.

Having found me, imagine you then forgot where you had parked your car. Would you examine every one of the hundreds of vehicles parked at the airport? Would you count the wheels on each car to see if it had four?

No, you would remember, and look for, special marks or characteristics of the area where you left your car to narrow down your search. Then you'd look for the marks that distinguish your car. Most cars would hardly get a glance, only those like yours.

Example 2, Finding Peter

If you need another example, part of the story of Cornelius will serve: The angel said to Cornelius, "Send men to Joppa and invite Simon who is also called Peter to come to you. He is staying at the house of Simon the tanner by the sea" (Acts 10:32).

To find Peter, they would not need to enter every house in the world. They would take note of the known facts about the house where Peter could be found and put these facts into the most logical search order:

1. The house is in Joppa
2. It is by the sea
3. It is Simon the tanner's house

First the men would go to Joppa. That would eliminate Nazareth, Azotus, and other places.

Next they would go down by the sea. That would eliminate houses in Joppa that were not along the seafront.

They would not stop at a blacksmith's house, nor at the house of a potter, fisherman, boatbuilder, merchant, inkeeper. Even if they came to a sign that said, "Jacob Brown, Tanner" they would not go in.

See how they have eliminated most enquiry. With a few simple facts, put into a sensible order, they'll find the house easily.

Four Marks of the True Church

The same process of elimination can find true Christians and the true church. You take a few salient marks of the true church, and arrange them in the most logical elimination sequence. For instance, here are four marks of the New Testament church...

1. Preaches the gospel that Christ died on the cross for our sins, was raised from the dead, ascended to the throne of God, and will return to judge the world (Acts 2:23-24, 32-33 1Co 15:3-4 1Th 4:16-17 2Tm 4:1).


4. Uses scriptural names and descriptions for the church, and refuses all names invented by men. The latter divide, whereas names and terms used by inspired writers are not divisive (Acts 11:26 Rom 16:16 1Co 1:10-13).

These marks would eliminate most churches, and you might then apply other marks to the remaining few if necessary.